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94th DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REP DOYLE: IT'S TIME TO CHANGE THE TONE IN POLITICS

The horrific events at that baseball field in Virginia have left our nation reeling. Our government and our people are more divided than at any time in recent memory. Our country can't survive if this anger and hatred continues. It will only breed more terrifying situations like the one we saw earlier this week. It's time to change the way our country and our people think and talk about politics.

The shooting was an assault on our democracy and on the very idea that we can disagree with each other without attacking one another. The incident was a shock, but was it really a surprise? Political divides are tearing apart our neighborhoods and communities, and sometimes even families. Anger has replaced civility. Nowadays some of us look at others as political enemies before we think of them as neighbors, family members or coworkers.

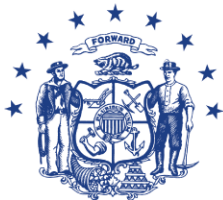
It's time to improve the tone in politics. It won't happen in Washington or Madison. It has to start right here – with you and with me.

So how do we get back to a culture of respect and collaboration? Let's start by looking in the mirror.

This isn't just the responsibility of politicians. This is a challenge to everyone, regardless of whether you consider yourself "political" or not, to change our state for the better.

As regular citizens, we can each bring civility and respect back into our political discourse. We can give everyone the benefit of the doubt. Even if we don't agree with someone, we should listen to what he has to say and try to put our self in his shoes. We can respect the opinions of others even when we don't understand their logic or reasoning. Or maybe it's as simple as holding our tongue. What did our moms always tell us? If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all.

A lot of people in Wisconsin already do this. This has traditionally been a state where civility is valued. It's a place where we disagree with one another, but still value working together for the common good. We have been one of the most bipartisan states in the nation, and I truly believe this is because we value compromise and cooperation. This is the spirit that we need to share



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with the rest of the nation. We need to bring it to every conversation, every meeting, and every family dinner.

Listening and working together might not be easy, but it is the right thing to do. It might be hard and it might be frustrating, and it might make you want to hit your head against the table a few times. But a moment of personal frustration is one thousand times better than the angry violence now ripping our nation apart.

After the recalls and the protests in 2011, when our state was more divided than ever before in our history, political pundits around the country would often say “as goes Wisconsin, so goes America.” What they meant was that our state had become a predictor of things to come – trends that arose first in Wisconsin soon spread to other states. The phrase had a negative connotation – bad things were happening in Wisconsin and bad things would soon happen elsewhere.

What if we reclaim that phrase? What if we change it to mean that Wisconsinites support a return to civility, cooperation and compromise in politics? We already have a reputation as a leader among states – why not help lead the rest of our country by changing the tone of our politics? And why not start it in our own homes, neighborhoods and workplaces? Call the sibling you haven’t spoken to since that argument over politics. Drop a friendly note to the coworker you have snubbed since the last election. Find something good to say about someone you disagree with.

I believe that we can do this. I’m challenging myself to try every day and I hope that you will join me. Together, we can bring back a state that values listening, understanding, and working together. That is my hope for Wisconsin and as goes Wisconsin, so goes America.

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